MBC BRIEFING

FO LEDENTIAL

17 October 1957

FRENCE POLITICAL CRISIS

- I. As crisis continues, atmosphere increasingly tense.
 - A. Ministry of Interior has banned Communist demonstrations on Algeria scheduled for today--apparently fears Poujadists say interfere, cause riots which might get out of hand.
 - B. Communists may they will go ahead regardless of ban, but may be pleased to have excuse for poor showing.
 - C. Paris police had earlier suggested American personnel stay out of city today.
 - D. Meanwhile, widespread 24-hour protest strikes among gas and electricity workers completely effective.
- II. Independent leader Pinay's willingness to try for investiture tomorrow may be first break in crisis (credited with stopping 1952 inflation--also negotiated Moroccan independence 1955).
 - A. His choice by Coty originally regarded as effort to kill time, but Pinsy now appears to have some chance.
 - However success will depend heavily on willingness of those who refuse to join him at least to abstain--Popular Republicans, Radical Socialists and ex-Gaullist Social Republicans have refused to participate.
 - 2. Hopes to form Independent, Dissident and autonomus Radical coalition.
 - 3. Socialists -- still key factor -- have refused participation but reserved position on support until investiture speech.

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- 3. They smarting over Independent attacks on Socialist economy program, but may be willing to "stick" Independents with jeb.
- B. Social-economic unrest may aid Pinay by giving deputies sense of urgency.
- C. Nevertheless, many will be disturbed by his demand for a guarantee of one year in office and apparent plans to put on ice any major changes in Algerian policy.
- III. If Pinay fails, Coty expected to give Hollet second opportunity, but his prospects would be hurt if Socialist opposition sinks Pinay.
 - A. Mollet is widely respected, however, and could muster majorities on a wide variety of issues including Algeria.
 - B. Still some possibility Socialist-Independent differences will be sidestepped by installation of another stop-gap cabinet of the Bourges-Enunoury type.
 - 1. Compremise candidates mentioned include Pflimlin, Schuman (Popular Republicans), and Finance Minister Gmillard and Defense Minister Merice (Radical Socialists).

- 2. Such a move would only postpone major decisions on Algeria and economic policy.
- IV. Continuing impasse has increased speculation on possibilities of "unorthodox" solution.

1	A.					chase	48	for	return	rn	of :	De	Caulle	considerably
		enhanced if no solution by end of month.												
		1.	Perh	LPS	OVOD	sooner	if	sit	tua ti	5A	det	er	iorates	muddenly.

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- V. De Gaulle's stature progressively increased since publication of first volume of memoirs in 1954 made strong favorable public impression.
 - A. Now in good health following two cataract operations.
 - B. He is said to believe confluence economic and Algerian problems makes situation ripe for comeback. Not adverse to serving under Coty.

25X6

C. De Gaulle still has residue of support on right from World War II and RPF days.

B. Potential exists for broader following among center and built because of his proposed federal solution for Algeria.

1. France would "lead but not dominate."

- N. De Gaulle's terms reported to be very stiff, however.
 - In effect asks dissolution of Assembly for rest of present term—until 1961—while he legislates constitutional and other referms.
 - 2. Beputies as yet probably not ready to accept.
- P. De Gaulle so far shows no inclination to try coup, though this outside possibility if rapid social-economic deterioration sets in.

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1. Extreme centralization of authority in Paris facilitates
25X1

much a move--could almost be done by phone.

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